sonnel that can is the largest number of maps possible at that rate. Those who have the right to that rate are the members of the ancestral family with the names of those four rates. At this point the logic of the Bella Coola fails to uphold the mythological pattern. No salmon-rate has remained in existence since the beginning of time; when one broke, owners were sometimes inform, and those who repaired the break became regarded as the rightful possessors. The system of ownership prevailing at the time of abandoning the rates, was that individuals, not groups, had rights to certain sections of the rate which were salable like other personal property. In most cases this right was connected with a name, marking the section of rate, which had to be duly validated by presents. In other cases, the intangible ownership was sold without any mark whatever.[1] Unless transacted in this way, disputes were frequent. Rights of this kind were never sold although an owner often leased his section for a night, or longer period, receiving goods in return, and not forfeiting his ownership thereby. This was particularly common when the owner was planning to give a potlatch. No case was heard of in which the right to a certain section of salmon-rate was given to a non-member of the ancestral family. Theoretically, this was possible, but practically it would be so inconvenient that it is most unlikely ever to have occurred, since the Bella Coola is never such a slave to legal privileges that he fails to be guided by common sense.

Although individual ownership is thus recognized with regard to sections of salmon-rates and suitable places for chicken-rates, the owner is bound to share his haul. When he catches a large number of fish, anyone, whether related to him or not, can demand some. He cannot refuse, since to do so would brand him as selfish. The effective check on this system

[1] Great difficulty was experienced in learning about the distribution of rights to sections of salmon-rates. The evidence is conflicting, and though every effort was made to verify and check the above, there may be further explanations which have not been.

law in public opinion which expresses contempt for a lazy man who is constantly begging.

To anyone familiar with the definite social groupings of a tribe divided into clans or land-owning families, the unnamed family of the Bella Coola must appear as a vague and unreal unit, only distinguished by its intangibility. So it was found when investigating in the field. When information began to accumulate, it seemed as if there must be some definite obligations incumbent upon all members of the unnamed family, but none could be found. Without asking a direct question, the point was raised whether, if a man were killed, the members of his unnamed family would unite to avenge him. Conversely, were they liable for the death of any member? In each case the reply was in the negative; these matters concern only the immediate family. In regulating marriage the unnamed family is important, since it is wise for a man or woman to seek his mate within the members of that group, though it is not compulsory. Theoretically, the terms of kinship applied to members of the immediate family may be extended to members of the unnamed family, but in practice this is rarely the case, and, if so, is fortuitous. It might be argued that this somewhat wide application of kinship terms, ranging on the classificatory usage, is a relic of an earlier, and now broken-down, clan system. It is impossible to prove or to deny such a connection. When trying to discover whether the members of an unnamed family ever contributed to a potlatch whereby one of their fellows established himself as a chief, the following interesting statement was received. The previous winter the informant had been in Bella Bella, and there the point was raised by a Bella Bella chief whom he quoted as follows:

"We laugh at you Bella Coola because each of you is always trying to be chief. Our system is much better; we all help one another."

The man agreed with the Bella Bella men that there was an important difference between the practices of the two tribes.

c/Mc/Swanton E-1 (1922-1924) 1948
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friends, another cause for their preferential treatment. A Bella Coola who had been enslaved and ransomed had to undergo a cleansing ceremony to remove the taint of slavery before he could take part in the ceremonies of the community. It was impossible to learn the details of this rite.

A master had complete power over a slave, unaffected by the force of public opinion, since the affairs of a slave, being without redress, were of no consequence to anyone. Accordingly, the fate of a slave depended on the character of his master, as on his own ability and industry. An industrious slave was valued; such an one would not be traded or sold except through dire necessity, and in course of years he became, as to actual treatment was concerned, one of the family. Many masters gave their slaves *feasts*[49] during preparations, spending large sums for the purpose. In such a case the slave might become an influential member of the community, though the fact that he was not free was never forgotten. On the other hand, a master had not the slightest compunction about beating a lazy slave, and could kill him if he so desired. None of the present Bella Coola has heard of such a case; it was considered more sensible to sell or give away an unsatisfactory slave. It was accepted as a matter of course that a master should provide his slaves with food and clothing, and everything produced or obtained by one belonged to him. A slave-owner had full rights to his female slaves, and unquestionably exercised them. The only restraints were the jealousy of his own wife, or wives, and the feeling that it was unlighted for a free man to demean himself. It was impossible to learn with even approximate accuracy to what extent intercourse took place between masters and slaves. Probably to a great deal, though there was considerable freedom of relations between slave women and the young men of the community, unrestrained by the pride of chieftainship. When a slave had been faithful for a number of years and had become almost a member of the family, his master would try

[49] Last phase (I, p. 98) was now easily given.

chief had thus obtained a seat for his daughter, as well as ones for his two sons. But usually a woman continues to use the ancestral name given to her in infancy until she is able to assist her husband in a potlatch, when a name is validated for her (see I, p. 400). The ancestral names of the first women to occupy this earth are reserved for women and, like men's names, vary in prestige according to the persons of their owners. Most names given to children, though embedded in origin myths, are applicable to either sex; and these are the common designations of women. Cases are known in which a woman has assumed an ancestral name if her brother has allowed it to fall into disrepute through failure to give potlatches.

With such a fluid system, no fixed line can be drawn between chief and commoner. But after his fourth potlatch a man's influence in the community has become so great that he will usually feel justified in having the carpenters make for him a memorial seat. There is nothing to prevent a person having one made for him before he has given the requisite number of potlatches, but too rapid assumption may render him liable to the scorn of the community through his failure to show himself sufficiently "strong." The contempt shown to anyone attempting to usurp too lofty a place is a strong deterrent to a proud young man.

On the memorial seat are carved the man's ancestral crests, in other words the forms in which his first ancestors came to earth, or some of the beings with whom they came in contact. To show these is a matter of pride, but unless the display is fittingly validated, the man's own dignity will be lowered, as well as that of his ancestors. Construction of a seat is particularly common when a man is establishing himself in the ancestral position behind the fire, and claims this to be where his first ancestor sat. Others among the first people may have chosen seats in other parts of the house, and in these, likewise, a man who is taking his ancestral name may have a memorial seat constructed. Establishment in such a position increases a chief's feeling of natural superiority, as if strength-

ability are always seeking to lend goods to those who are planning potlatches or other rites, knowing that the investment is safe and lucrative.

X uses his own discretion as to how much wealth is necessary. He knows how much he owes for presents received on previous occasions, and would not dream of giving a potlatch until able to repay these. Failure to do so would hold him up to the derision of the whole countryside. But he acts upon his own judgment with regard to interest. If he continues to lend goods until he is able to repay with great increase, he gains prestige from his generous returns, but meanwhile he does not enjoy the distinction which would have followed a smaller affair at an earlier period. Further, there is the uncertainty about how much his wife's family will contribute, though that can be estimated with a fair degree of accuracy; in Bella Coola every transaction is made publicly, so each man knows the wealth of his neighbours. The favourite month for a potlatch is October, before the *burial* dances, when there is abundance of food. At this season there is plenty of salmon, eulachon, and crabapples, all of which might be ruined by frost. Occasionally, a potlatch takes place after the *burial* period, but in that case the only foods available are chicken grouse, smoked meat, smoked fish, dried huckleberries, and dried berries. If several men in one village decide to give potlatches in the same year there may be rivalry and dispute as to which shall be first. There is no satisfactory method of settling the point.

When all is ready X calls a herald (I, p. [illegible]) to summon his fellow villagers to his house the following day for *eluemus*. It is customary for all to accept, but no social obligation is broken should a man or woman fail to do so.

The men moving to and fro in their own house, knowing that few food will be distributed. While his expected guests are relieving themselves by vomiting and purging, X, aided by his family and others, prepares large quantities of food, borrows boxes, and makes other necessary arrangements. The

FEATURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE POTLATCH [illegible]

one by repeating loudly a few words, or even phrases, from the speaker being delivered, or calling on the audience to notice what has just been said and to listen attentively. A white man would be annoyed at such interruptions, but the Bella Coola consider them evidences of attentiveness.

The making of comments is a duty performed at every type of ceremony, but it is indispensable at potlatches, since a chief depends on the heralds to emphasize and explain the points of his family history which are being displayed. One intelligent man likened their functions to a compass, constantly guiding the course of ceremonial life. Without a herald a chief would be as useless as a ship tossed on the ocean with no hand to steer. Although the principal duty of heralds is to extol the actions of a chief, they can, and are expected to, decide one who fails to carry out the customary requirements. Cases have occurred in which influential men have so far forgotten their function of generosity as to fail to invite their fellows after killing a deer or other large animal; or women have declined to share their abundant berries. Nothing is said at the time, but when next the people have come together for some ceremony, a herald refers to the occasion under as slim a disguise that everyone is aware of his meaning. This public ridicule lowers the prestige of a chief to such an extent that he is careful not to offend again. Not many years ago, a certain Kimsquit chief failed to ask others to share some mountain goats which he had killed, so the first opportunity a herald referred to himself as Tahi, Mountain Goat, and all present realized that he was really alluding to the one who had been remiss.

Heralds must exercise care in their criticisms at the expense of chiefs because, unless public opinion is with them, the point of the remark is lost, and they expose themselves to the wrath of the person offended. Nevertheless, heralds always strive to cause merriment, and often take risks with this aim in view. They try to make humorous remarks, and also to cause amusement by their action. As already described, the dance of a potlatch may throw to one of them a dish containing liquid food

and those who are not. Any o'ali, provided that he has enough food for a meal, can call in his neighbours, but the one who usually does so is a man who has received his name a year or two before the occasion.

A few days before the time selected, the host asks the singers to compose a new song for him. For a marginal dancer particularly, and in some cases for any one of the other three divisions of the society, the new dance not deal with incidents connected with the host's ancestral story, but with humorous or disgraceful incidents of the present time. If a man has caught ten salmon and kept them all for himself, his misdeeds is commented upon in the song. If a wife has deserted her husband for another man, the actions of the two are mercilessly ridiculed. If a chief has failed to display generosity as is likewise recorded, and reference is made to events in dance circle. To do this is one of the functions of a marginal, and the singers are always ready to assist him. In the same time they often add a new incident to the case belonging to some other o'ali dances so that he too will be able to perform. In this way the sets are remembered from year to year, which is different from the customary Bella Coola usage.

On the morning of the day chosen, the host asks one of the singers to beat a drum repeatedly but slowly, as a signal that a non-ceremonial dance is about to take place. Minor men, herald go from house to house announcing who is to give the dance. In the late afternoon the people gather in the dance's house where men, women, and children sit themselves without distinction of rank, the only reserved place being that for the singers behind the fire. They beat out the host's name and he dances to it, while the singers themselves sing the words to the amusement of the audience. Using their own discretion, they then beat out the name of another o'ali and he also dances, followed in succession by a third, a fourth, and as many as the singers think fit. Sometimes the songs of crests are used in a similar manner. When many have danced, the host distributes food to all his guests, not forgetting to give the largest

performances of this kind. But ecological and ethical concepts, shown at their highest development in the potlatch, are not limited to a few weeks of the year or to any class of the community. Generosity on a large scale can be publicly displayed by chiefs alone, but as a homologous skin virtue must be practised by everyone, since avarice is considered a major sin. Anyone who happens to pass house in which a meal is taking place must be invited to dine in; to do otherwise would be considered rude. The guest summoned must take at least a bite to show that he is at cheerful and not proud to eat with his host, while if he is hungry, he shows whatever is being served as a matter of course. The head of the family should be the first to taste any food as proof that it is not poisoned, but otherwise he fares no better, if any, better than his guests. This custom is now rapidly falling into disuse through the construction of individual food houses with doors and locks. The fishermen who has exclusive rights to a suitable place for netting eulachon or salmon may give some of his catch to anyone who asks him. If he has taken four salmon, the first solicitor is given one, later comers none at all. When a net is set in the river, anyone passing followed to raise it and take some of the contents. If there are two fish, he may remove one, if many, three or four. To do all would be a despicable theft, sufficient to brand the trespasser as greedy; hence public opinion governs the transactions being carried to excess. A hunter who brings back cured mountain goats or other large game is expected to invite a neighbours to a feast, which normally means that he must save his takings.

Presents of this kind increase the power of the donor who has thus acted in accordance with Bella Coola ethics, and are advantageous investments since others are reciprocate. The system is carried to such lengths that, old enemy years, it was more profitable to give away goods than to sell them. In the case of a sale, the purchaser endeavors to give as little as possible, whereas the recipient of a gift craves as much as

*This is a modern practice, dating from the introduction of house-locks.

1:McDermitt E-1 (1922-1924) 1948
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of each song denies to it. Anyone who has enough food to provide a meal for all is glad to invite his neighbours to such an affair, but the singers and heralds can force a stingy man to act as host. Everyone knows his neighbour's resources and the singers have no hesitation in going to the house of a man with an ample supply of food and beginning to beat out songs there. The heralds are quick to see what is happening and call the people, with the result that the involuntary host is compelled to provide a meal in order not to be thought mean and churlish. Without waiting for the singers to take the initiative, heralds likewise often invite people to the house of a man whom they know to be well provided with food.

During the summer, the necessity of laying in supplies of salmon makes it impossible to hold many dances, although one of the non-sacred type just described takes place whenever there is a lull in the fishing. In the early autumn, when berries, fish, and game are abundant, the daughter of chiefs turn to potlatches and the lengthy preliminaries are begun. At this season, too, a chief who lacks sufficient wealth to invite foreign guests, calls in his neighbours for a sacred dance and initiates some of his young relatives into that society. The ritual, described in the last chapter, resembles that of a potlatch except that no new house is constructed, there is no return of a dead relative, and the ceremonial connected with the coming of foreigners is necessarily omitted. In some cases a chief performs this type of rite a year before he proposes to hold a potlatch, and explains that he is doing so because he will be unable to give presents to the inhabitants of his own village at the later affair. Gifts so distributed are returnable with interest, though it is not obligatory for recipients to do this in time for the donor to make use of their repayment at his potlatch.

Ceremonials of this nature occupy the Bella Coola during the early autumn, while in winter *tsetsut* dances take place almost nightly. When they are over, it is time for the non-sacred variety of *o'alk* performances, and for another type of rite, [illegible].

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well, and these are soon learnt by the child who is fortunate enough to have many kinsmen. Primarily, responsibility rests with the parents for the care and support of their offspring, but they have the advice, assistance, and material aid of their relatives. Nor are these limited to the near kindred of either father or mother; all members of the ancestral family take their part. Housemates, also, even if unrelated, take an interest in any child who shows their hallucination, irrespective of his rank.

Much of the care bestowed on children is of a magical nature and must be reserved until a later chapter. Little boys follow their fathers on hunting expeditions and so acquire knowledge by practical experience, as do girls from their mothers with regard to household tasks and feminine occupations. Even small children are quick to notice the attention paid to the orders of chiefs, and carry out their commands without demur. A disobedient child is beaten or thrown into cold water; the parents usually act in such cases, though a near relative does not hesitate to do so, especially if he is a chief. Like all other children, Bella Coola boys and girls are fond of stories and listen eagerly to the tales told in the long evenings by some old man or woman. Many of these are somewhat obscene, but they serve to teach much ancient lore, and at the same time to emphasize many taboos and restrictions which are thus inculcated without definite schooling. They illustrate the laws of morality, as does the public disapproval shown to anyone who infringes some point of etiquette or behaviour. If a child makes fun of a one-fish or a bull-head, he is not told to stop doing so; instead, one of his elders tells him how, in the distant past, there was a famine, and adviums him not to scoff at the fish which alone saved his ancestors from starvation at that time. If a rude little boy laughs at a maimed or deformed man, he is told of *Skūtsh*, a Bella Bella cockle who repeatedly mocked a one-eyed man and presently, himself, lost the sight of an eye.

"Don't laugh at cripples, blind people, or those who are

done just described. The giving of these at this time is not obligatory, nor does it affect the validity of the coming marriage. It is merely a mark of friendly feeling between the two groups of relatives, and, by adding to the importance of the event, increases the potential strength of the unions children.

If either X or Y should die during the period of engagement, the presents, or their equivalent, must be returned to the donors. No formal methods are employed to ensure this, but the force of public opinion suffices to compel a man to do that which is proper; in fact, he is anxious to do so. If Y should die, an effort is made to replace her with a sister, cousin, or other near relative, so that the friendly relations entered upon by the two families may not be lost. The gifts mutually given by the two families may be returned and re-donated or the substitute simply takes Y's place without further arrangement. Sometimes, in spite of the wishes of their parents and the dictates even carried out, either X or Y breaks the engagement by going to live with somebody else. It is then a mark of pride for the family of the offender to return the gifts they have received, and almost equally a mark of honour for the aggrieved party to give back what has been bestowed upon them, in order to demonstrate how little value they place on the possession of goods.

Though a lengthy engagement is desirable, it may be curtailed. If, for example, one of X's relatives should die before the usual period has elapsed, Y's father may suggest an immediate wedding. He knows that X's family will have heavy expenses in connection with the burial and mourning rites, hence it is courteous to offer a quick marriage with the financial advantages accruing to them at the ceremony. In this case, X either does not work at all for Y's family, or for only a short time. Moreover, if Y reaches marriageable age without her father receiving suitable proposals, he can himself take the initiative by consulting the parents of an eligible young man. If the suggestion is agreeable, the engagement is announced in the manner already described, and the marriage takes place

[illegible] THE BELLA COOLA INDIANS

one, but only one of great importance could hope to aspire to more, while the case of *Palka* was considered to be unique and highly desirable.

A chief's wives always lived in the same house, and it is said that disputes were frequent. *Palka* endeavoured to prevent jealousy by providing each woman with a special bedroom and sleeping for a single night with each in order. One informant had two wives when a young man, and he found that the only way to avoid constant bickering was by sleeping in one bed, between them. The evidence seems clear that plurality of wives was usually the cause of considerable friction, though this never deterred a man from taking a second wife if he could. The only special rule of incest in this regard was that two sisters could not be married at the same time.

In answer to questions about polyandry, two men told of a luxurious woman who had two faithful-minded husbands between whom she used to sleep. The whole affair was considered disgusting, but public opinion did not extend the affection since a person's marital affairs were considered to concern the individual only. It was accordingly assumed that the institution of true polyandry did not exist, when, occasionally, information was volunteered about its occurrence in the families of influential men. A very powerful chief, if his only child was a daughter, quite frequently married her simultaneously to the sons of other chiefs. She was then considered most fortunate, since only a wealthy man could provide for a daughter in this way, and expend the large quantities of goods necessary to ensure her proper marriage in each case. The husbands were never brothers, and seldom related, since the ambitious parent wished to ally his daughter with different ancestral families for the benefit of any resultant children. The joint wife was accustomed to live for a number of months in the home of one of her husbands, with her other husbands forming part of his household. She would then move to the house of another, who assumed the leadership of the group,

ceremony, they can part or dissolve without anyone being offended.

When a wife runs away and seeks refuge with another man, her husband sometimes tries to kill his rival, but frequently both families endeavour to heal the breach amicably. Some of her relatives, particularly those who played an influential part in the marriage, first ask the husband whether or not he is willing to take her back. If the answer is in the affirmative, they next try to persuade her to return. Every argument is used, in many cases combined with threats against her seducer, and the reconciliation often succeed. But she must never go back without presents, "to dry with for the water that has covered the marriage." The husband invites all his fellow-villagers to his house to a ceremony which is said "to open the house (of trouble)." The singers are in attendance and sing in succession many *barsi* songs, followed by *saadi* songs, and to which the owner of the song dances, but since the supernatural beings are not present, the affair is of a non-sacred nature. The goods received from the family of the erring wife are distributed and the matter is at an end. Those who persuaded the wife to return are specially rewarded.

If the fortitude with should refuse to return, or if she should bear a child to her lover, reconciliation is not possible. There is no incentive on the woman's relatives to return to the husband so much goods as he has expended, with additions if they wish to splendid their own reputation. If the husband is clearly to blame, or if he is the deserting partner, his wife's family are not required to return the gifts they have received. There is no judicial tribunal of any kind, the force of public opinion alone being instrumental if the offender wishes to maintain his reputation in the community. Acting on this principle, the relatives of a deserted wife sometimes restore to her husband's family the presents they have received, thereby demonstrating their nobility and at the same time shaming the offender.

Formerly there was an elaborate ceremony to dissolve the

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husband or wife who destroyed a marriage by deserting his, or her, partner for a lover. One informant, aged about seventy, twice took part in this rite when a young man, but probably did not know the full details of it. He stated that it followed a divorce of two persons who had been married with full ceremony, whereas another, slightly younger informant, who remembered having seen the ceremony once when a mere lad, believed that it was only in the families of commoners. It appears certain that the rite has not been practised since about 1880, consequently there is an element of doubt as to the actual details, and even as to whether it was an affair of chiefs or commoners. It is probable that it was among the former.

When a woman deserted her husband one of the leading chiefs would take this opportunity of giving a ceremony of the type known as *ilaplilum*.[1] After consulting with his fellows to ensure that no one had any objections, and rarely including the deserted husband, he summoned the singers to his house. He would tell them his plans, and they would prepare the songs for the occasion. Five or six were always composed, with an effort to include as many foul remarks and allusions as possible, particularly with regard to the organs of the woman and her lover.

The singers spent about a week composing the songs, and meanwhile the chief who was giving the ceremony prepared food and made other necessary arrangements. When these were ready, the donor invited to his house all the members of the *nuxalk* and *kwatsa'* societies for a rehearsal. The singers sang over the airs for the instruction of the guests. They were always worded as if it were the deserted husband speaking in foul terms of his ex-wife. The theme of one was:

"My wife has pudenda like those of a black bear."

The guests joined in the singing and also supplied foul themes by calling out observations about the organs of women in general, and of the deserting wife in particular. The singers

[1] The relation of this to the *a'alk* dance of the same name is obscure, cf. I, p. 378.

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mind to incorporate as many of these as possible, so that the rite soon became a chorus of obscenities. The songs were sung and resung until all present were familiar with them, then the dancer of the rite distributed food and all departed.

The following afternoon everyone, including those ministered into either society, were invited to the dancer's house. Probably the only absentees from the village were the deserting wife and her lover, while guests from neighbouring settlements were often in attendance. On this occasion, for the first time, the deserted husband used to take the leading part. When the singers struck up the tune of the first song, he used to appear, supported by four or five assistants. His face was blackened with soot, he wore a lynx-skin belt, and above his head was fashioned some insulting object, usually a representation of the female organs made of wood, cedar-bark and berries, as realistic as possible. As the singers sang, aided by those who had learnt the songs on the previous day, the husband danced, moving his body so that the ornament on top of his head was shaken suggestively. Meanwhile the spectators kept calling out filthy epithets of any kind on his ex-wife and her lover. Sometimes the dancer was able to insert some obscene remarks into the display. On one occasion, for example, he pulled some lynx fur from his belt and threw it in the face of a *Tăl'ie* man who happened to be present, and who had once seduced a married woman and accordingly bore the brunt of a similar rite, with the remark:

"All *Tăl'ie* women have hairy pudenda like that."

The guests were invited to suggest foul nicknames for the man with whom the dancer's wife had eloped. One of these was adopted by general agreement of opinion, and the man was commonly called by it henceforth. Two names so created were:

Hăsdem, "The One Whose Face is Wrinkled like a Woman's Organs," and,

Emtlemk, "The One Who Cohabited Publicly."

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One very old man is still, 1923, commonly called by this last designation, much to his annoyance.

When the songs had been sung, each accompanied by the dancing of the deserted husband, the donor of the ceremony distributed food and the guests departed. The only advantage to the giver of the rite was that it enabled him to show his wealth in an apparently disinterested fashion by gifts of food. Usually he was a friend of the aggrieved husband.

When a husband deserted his wife, the other women of the village used to perform an exactly similar ceremony. The same type of songs were composed, and during their singing the deserted wife used to dance, wearing above her head representations of a penis and testicles. By means of hidden strings she was able to cause the former to become erect.

On other occasions the ceremony was varied by an announcer asking the offended party about the appearance of the deserter. There followed a minute and highly coloured description about the unpleasantness of his genital organs, a description which was swiftly incorporated into the songs.

It can be taken as a matter of course that the above description is little more than an outline of the Bella Coola ceremony of shaming. In spite of its definiteness, it is important, as evidence of the former sentiment with regard to divorce. Obscene though the ceremony must have been, both in acting and in the free use of personalities, it must have been a powerful deterrent to divorce.* Indeed it would be difficult to imagine a stronger one in a community where a man's position is judged by public opinion and where his greatest aversion is to public ridicule. It is unfortunate that we shall probably never know whether the rite was associated with chiefs or commoners.

CEREMONIAL MARRIAGE

Since marriage gains much of its importance from the complicated business transactions between the two families, with

*A similar rite was occasionally carried out in connection with chiefs.

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place in the manner already described. After passing through the fourth hole, or for the fourth time through the single opening, the two go to some lonely pool in the forest where the mourner washes. They light a fire and deposit on it some of his clothing, placing the rest in a stump or hollow tree. The friend always takes with him a supply of new clothing which the person being purified puts on and returns home, cleansed from the immediate taint of death.

The above rite protects widower or widow, but does not alter the fact that for one year they are ceremonially "unclean" and must obey sundry taboos. They must not go to the bank of the river, or even appear at the front door of a house facing it. To do so is displeasing to the salmon; for the same reason they cannot eat this fish unless it has been smoked. If they wish to travel on the ocean, they cannot embark at the village but must go through the woods to a point on the shore and there be picked up by the canoe. There is a regular "Widows and Widowers Rock" about a mile on either side of every village on the ocean. The one near Kimsquit is called *Splen'ti*, and there is thought to be blood on it. A person mourning a consort must wear a hat decorated with miniature coppers of which the bottoms are bent upwards; should this be omitted, when the offender remarries, the new husband or wife will soon die.

In addition to these taboos, there are customary laws of behaviour, an infraction of which renders the offender liable to social disapproval. Widows and widowers should cut their hair short, and the former should rub ashes on the face. Sexual intercourse is prohibited to both sexes; if this rule is broken, the relatives of the deceased are insulted. Remarriage should not take place for at least a year, although among poor people it sometimes occurs after only six months, in which case all taboos and restrictions automatically cease. There is no law on this point, but it is considered fitting to allow this period to elapse. These requirements clearly indicate that bereavement is not merely an individual affair, but entails social and

2:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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tense throughout this chapter, and to assume the presence of a number of young men and women ignorant of the significance of the rites. Formerly, the *ẖukusiut* often had difficulty in impressing the uninitiated with their prowess, and feuds with the o'alt were common.

Although membership in the *ẖusiut* society depends on an ancestral prerogative, it is essentially a democratic institution. A certain amount of wealth is necessary to validate a *ẖusiut* prerogative, but nothing comparable to that required for a potlatch; in fact, poor men are often persons of great importance within the ranks of the society. Nor are the prerogatives considered to be as valuable as ancestral rights, so that slaves are often admitted as *ẖukusiut* by their masters. An important *ẖusiut* is not esteemed by the community in the same way as the donor of many potlatches; in short, membership in the society brings limited ceremonial and semi-religious advantage, not social prestige of a public nature.

Powers and Functions of the Society

Any secret society can be viewed from the standpoints of a member, and of a non-member. The scope of the *ẖusiut* organization can be most clearly outlined by describing first what an uninitiated person knows about it. From his infancy, parents impress upon a child the supernatural powers of the *ẖukusiut* and the dangers attached to their rites. Such instruction is perhaps strongest where one, or both, is not a member. They then voice their own fears, and do not merely deceive for the good of the society. Steeped as every child is in a firm belief of the near presence of the supernatural, he readily believes what he is told. He learns, for example, that if, without special invitation, he dares enter the house where a *ẖusiut* dance is taking place—at any time during the four days or more that it lasts—his spirit will be drawn from him. This is sufficient to deter him from prying too closely into the rites. Strangely enough, there seem always to have been differences in teaching with respect to this deception. It is believed that if a non-

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

*575 774 755 [784 626] initiate pass between the central fire and the raised platform behind it, where the dancer is usually concealed, his spirit will be attracted to this material object. Even though the performer is in another house at the time, he at once senses what has happened and asks who has lost his spirit. The guilty person, believing that he will die unless it is returned to him, always admits what he has done. The dancer, accompanied by several attendant *kukusiut*, proceeds to the raised platform, presses his cupped hands four times against it, and by sucking with his mouth pretends to draw forth the spirit. But since the dancer has a direct call (II, p. 6) from his supernatural patron (II, p. 6), he cannot come in contact with the uninitiated without danger to the latter, so he transfers the supernatural element to the leg of another *kusiut*, who is not dancing at the time, by pressing four times. This assistant then returns it to the owner by kneading it four times into the back of his neck. [626] The reckless uninitiated person suffers no harm, but is more careful in future.

[784 626] Another belief is that if a non-member even walks close to the doorway of the house during the four days, or more, that a dance is taking place, his spirit is attracted to the dancer, wherever he may be at the moment. Consequently the uninitiated use the beach path instead of the sidewalk. Accounts [778] differ as to what results from the transgression. According to one, the dancer falls down as if dead, due to the contact between something non-sacred and the power with which he is imbued. It is at once recognized what has happened and any *kusiut* can draw forth the spirit by placing his two hands, shaped like a cup, against the dancer and sucking violently. While so doing he calls *hoip* loudly and any *kukusiut* present beat time furiously. As soon as the alien spirit has been removed, the dancer recovers. Still holding his hands cupped together, the extractor now proceeds to the house of the non-member and returns the latter's spirit by kneading it into the back of his neck. If this were not done, the loser would soon [784] become mad, try to eat dirt, and die. According to another

E 99 K6 Boas Kwakiutl E-5 (1922-1924)948
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informant, the entry of a strange spirit into his body does not inconvenience the dancer, although he senses its presence, and asks who will pay for its return. Unless the owner at once steps forward to claim his property and promises to pay, his spirit is thrown into the fire and he dies. The *kukuxsiut* sometimes tell an uninitiated person that his spirit has been attracted from him, thereby terrifying him so greatly that he appeals to a shaman to recover it for him. The expert greases his hands, warms them at a fire, and pretends to pluck something from the *kuxsiut* which he inserts into the loser's neck.

In view of the firm conviction that the spirit is essential to an individual's welfare, it is not surprising that this belief should awe the uninitiated and fill them with profound respect for the *kukuxsiut*. The diversity in the details of procedure proves that the practice has not become standardized; those who are not members of the society believe and do not test the claims.

Another source of strength claimed by the *kukuxsiut* is ability to witness and imitate the dances of the supernatural beings held in *Nusmāt·a* prior to the entry of *Āiqunīm*. As already described, it is believed that a supernatural element from every living creature upon earth ascends at this time but, in a way that is not fully understood, only those belonging to *kukuxsiut* can take part in the ceremonies. Is it strange, therefore, that members of the society are regarded with awe by their less fortunate fellows? Presents are given after every dance in *Nusmāt·a* and the supernatural elements receive their due share. When, however, *Āiqunīm* enters, he is so big and so hot that almost all who have assembled rush forth furiously, and in the crush at the narrow doorway disaster overtakes many of the visiting human representatives. Some drop their gifts, and their owners will be unfortunate; others fall, and their owners cannot survive until the next ceremonial season. This same fate may befall even those who are not members of the *kusiut* society, but they do not have the ability to appreciate what has happened.

4:66 Dorsey E-5 (1912-1924) 1948
NES Bellecourts NES

end their subterfuges, it sometimes happens that an uninitiated person sees or hears something which he should not know. The simplest way to deal with this situation is to kill the observer. It is said that on late on upon a young man, impelled by curiosity, wandered up a valley into which he had been warned not to penetrate, and met a Cannibal whom he believed had vanished into the upper realms. Almost dumbfounded, he accepted the latter's invitation to sit down, and was slain by him. More often, and especially if the observer is the child of a *hatsint*, he is initiated into the ranks of the society. If this happens at any time of year except the actual ceremonial season, he cannot perform immediately, but he is taken to the secret meeting place of the village chiefs, and there the mysteries of the organization are explained to him. The uninitiated are told that the observer has had a shaman's experience. With the aid of the older *hatsint* he then performs a dance and conjuring feat of the type already described (I, p. 564), and is secluded until the next autumn, meanwhile wearing the distinctive collar of a shaman. In the songs used on this occasion no mention is made of a wash-basin, as of course the lad only performs ceremonially. When winter comes he is formally initiated into the society.

It is somewhat difficult to understand and explain the sentiments which lead a young man to obey rigidly the dictates of the senior *hatsint* in deceiving his former friends. If it becomes known that a youth has seen something which should have been concealed, the senior *hatsint* of his village meet in their ceremonial spot and decide that he must be put through the shaman's rite. Some relative of the youth is always ready to provide the necessary *hatsint* prerogative; otherwise he would have to be killed. Two or three members are then sent to catch the young man. On some pretext they lure him into the woods and then carry him away, struggling in fear, to the holy of holies, the place which he had been told to avoid since he would die if he penetrated to it. Here he finds all the seniors of his village, seated with grave expressions on

St. McDermott E-9 (1911-1914) text
NEA McDermott 9/20

their form. In spite of what he may have seen, the lad cannot rid himself of the supernatural fears with which he has been swaddled from childhood, and the experience is terrifying to a degree. It may be that he has seen some of the whistles, and thereby knows that the strange sounds are made by men, not by supernatural beings. In this case he is shown their mechanism in detail, and warned of the dire fate which will befall him if he tells others of his knowledge. Fear impels him to silence, and at the same time he realizes that what he has discovered has placed him in a superior position to that of his former associates. He feels, too, that he has been admitted into the ranks of the society in which his father, grandfather, and ancestors have distinguished themselves, and that it would be desecration to make light of what they have held sacred. Finally, an initiate does not at first grasp the fact that all the cries are deceptions, and by the time that this is apparent to him he has become so thoroughly a part of the organization that he has no thought of betraying his associates, upsetting a vital part in the complicated fabric of Bella Coola life, and exposing himself to ruin and death. A logical white man might think these considerations insufficient, but the existence of the society proves that the varied motives operate so strongly that a young man does keep silence. Some informants state that hypnotism was formerly used to ensure obedience.

The *Ixtaxiat* are always ready to deal with an emergency such as sometimes occurs in spite of every precaution. It is remembered that about one hundred and fifty years ago during a dance at the village of *Nuqaymāit*, a figure, representing one of the supernatural beings, had the misfortune to drop his mask, the strings by which it was tied having worn through. The house was crowded with uninitiated to whom the deception at once became apparent. For a moment there was wild confusion, but the senior *Ixtaxiat* rose to the occasion and closed the door, allowing no uninitiated person to leave. Then a *Ixtaxiat* was sent out with a whistle which he sounded as if the supernatural being of which it was the voice was growing

power of the last century it has become customary to explain the disappearing of a monk as due to a sudden call to the heaven.

Another means by which the *kukwsta* protect themselves from doubting non-members is by the use of spies. The anecdote (II, p. 16) of the society admit some intelligent youth and ask the consent of his father, or other guardians, to make him a spy. If this is granted, the youth is lured into the woods and carried forcibly to the sacred meeting-place, where he finds the senior *kukwsta* of his village seated, an awe-inspiring band. They explain to him the dances used, show him the whistles and other equipment, and instruct him that it is his duty to inform them if he hears any uninitiated person casting doubts on the power of the society. Proud of his trust, and fearful of what would happen should he fail to carry out his duties, the spy begins his work. Ignorant of his knowledge, the uninitiated have no hesitation in talking with him and if he hears one of them expressing doubts as to the powers of the society, or telling that he has seen the sacred meeting-place or some of the regalia, he at once notifies one of the marshals. The over-confident person is then initiated. Thus the *kukwsta* are constantly recruiting their strength from the most intelligent uninitiated, thereby adding to the influence of their society and lessening the dangers from non-members.

Sometimes a man is forced to undertake the task on account of too great knowledge of *kukwsta* matters. The following incident, related by a spy, is worth recording as a concrete example of this point:

> Between 1870 and 1880, a Rivers Inlet Cannibal performed the Cannibal dance in Bella Coola, presumably being entitled to do so by a Bella Coola name and prerogative. During his period of seclusion he died from a sudden hemorrhage, and the uninitiated were told that he had been carried away to the mysterious regions of the sky, the customary explanation in such circumstances. Soon afterwards some Bella Coola returned from Victoria, and an old woman told them the news, ignorant of the fact that an uninitiated lad of fifteen had entered the house and was listening eagerly. A cautious movement betrayed his presence to the horrified *kukwsta* and the boy fled, terrified at the turn of events.

B.-96-Boas-E-3 (1922-1924) 1948
NEB Bella Coola NEB

[No Dance of NoaKanim]

approaches the Bella Coola River, and proceeds up it, beneath the surface of the water, invisible to all. Its destination is *Smaiem-a*, where its captain leaps to *Nuxpalemaicta* to await the coming of *Squaiem*. The crew consists of a number of supernatural beings, who will be described in connection with the ceremonies the night of *nalaxem*. This canoe, which brings the salmon and berries to Bella Coola, has four masts but no sails, and is enormous. Whenever the weather is fine, *Noākŭmaem* lowers first one side and then the other of his craft so that the salmon may leave; after swimming around for a time they always return, refreshed by their exercise. In former times when people were purified by ceremonial chastity, several succeeded in seeing the craft, and from them it is known that it is about six hundred yards in length, that it travels without leaving a wake, that any canoes passing near are sucked along after it, and that a mallard duck, perched on the bow, quacks continuously. Intelligent informants agreed that the bringing of the salmon during the autumn was inconsistent, but they could offer no explanation. One man believed that this was pointed out not many years ago by a man whose patron was *Nāākŭmaem*, but that the marshals requested him not to upset established ritual by too much logic. *Noākŭmaem* is patron for several *kukusiut*, who are believed by the uninitiated to be able to see his canoe. As he passes up the river the *kusiut* dances begin.

It is unnecessary to describe the full ritual in each village, as this is supposed to be identical, and probably contains only slight variations, if any. In *Tcumatl* the *kusiut* who has the prerogative of seeing *Noākŭmaem* is a certain *Qoxalān-i*,[15] in Kimsquit, *Alaxtinwasam*,[16] and in *Sixkistl*, *Xemtnum*. Although,

[15] Details of this dance were learnt from the father of *Qoxalān-i*, who intimated that the name was a family possession. Several months later an old woman referred to the handing of this designation by her father and said that the present name had failed to return it. Bitter feelings are often caused by disputes of this kind.

[16] Meaning "Cloud Covered," a reference to the invisibility of his patron, as if the latter were hidden by clouds. Many *kusiut* names have significances of this type.

Z: McDermith B-5 (1923-1924) 1948
NSA Bellacoola NSA

*576 *796 tion and those quarrelling follow him as he goes to every house growling and crying *xwe*, *xwe*, *xwe*. By the time he returns home their anger has cooled. It is then necessary to quiet X by means of the elaborate beating of sticks. This is repeated four times, while a *daxiut* spits violently over him.

Before leaving his own home to attend a *daxiut* dance, a little food is always given to X in case he should become hungry and start biting people. On *qaiow* he always dances after the *dance of the ceremony*,[1] and when the *daxuxiut* eat together he always receives his portion immediately after that of the marshals. Fear of all Cannibals is one of the most potent deterrents to the uninitiated, but the most dreaded are those, like X, who have just returned from the land above and may at any moment break forth into an orgy of biting. Several elderly informants recalled vividly the terror with which they regarded such a Cannibal when they were young.

[620] [781]

The *daxuxiut* take full advantage of the fear which X inspires in the uninitiated. On *qaiow* nights when the time arrives for the latter to depart, they are often chased forth by the frenzy of X, or one of his fellow-Cannibals who has likewise been to the land above. X starts to call out, *xwe*, *xwe*, *xwe*, and rises to his feet; the singers at once begin to beat out one of his songs and the uninitiated hurriedly flee, while the Cannibal's guardians press close around him as he dances as if to prevent him running amuck among the frightened people crowding out of the door. As he dances and hears his song, he becomes more and more excited; he growls and only the repeated *hoip* of his guardians and their pressure upon the back of his neck appear to restrain him. Non-members and even those *daxuxiut* who do not understand the full mysteries of the Cannibal dance cannot fail to be impressed. The raising of the arms is supposed to inflame a Cannibal, so if it is desired still more to impress the uninitiated, one of the *daxuxiut* lifts his arms, and is bitten by X. The heralds at once go

[781]

[1] If several Cannibals have performed in a single year, the order in which they dance is subject to arrangement.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[The Cannibal Dance]

through the village announcing what has taken place. Meanwhile X, maddened by the taste of blood, dashes from the house, closely guarded by a number of *hahaiwe*. Growling, he enters the lowest house of the village and, to the uninitiated there, it appears as if the restraint of his guardians is all that prevents the biting demon from breaking loose among them. This is repeated at every house in the village, and then X returns to that in which *gukwe* is taking place, where he is guided to his usual corner and a *hahaiwe* throws cold water over him. Any senior *hahaiwe*, often one who is also a shaman, calls on three persons to beat time, and the frenzied orchestra of sticks sounds forth. X remains quiet and more water is thrown over him. This pounding of sticks is four times repeated, and after each more water is thrown over the Cannibal, until at last his temporary fit of frenzy is stilled. Then the *hahaiwe* set in comfort and leave. It must be remembered that the uninitiated hear the beating of sticks from adjacent houses, and their awe is perhaps increased by the fact that they cannot actually see what is taking place.

This liability to madness lasts throughout the ceremonial season, effectively suppressing any venturesome uninitiated, and at the same time serving as a bond of union among the *hahaiwe* themselves, who must sink individual differences of opinion in face of the absolute necessity of upholding X's prestige. A Cannibal novice can likewise become frenzied at any time during the summer following his initiation.

The Cannibal dance entails a considerable amount of physical and mental effort, while if X bites many individuals, as he likes to do as a means of demonstrating his prerogative, he is forced to expend a considerable amount of goods as "Bandages." These two factors often deter a man from performing this dance. A Cannibal who has just been initiated as a *hahaiwe* at once begins to bite, and is carried away to the upper regions. He is required, moreover, to give his ceremony the following winter, like any other novice. During the summer he generally remains hidden within his house, and when he goes

[illegible]

[illegible]

[The Cannibal Dance]

*375 *796 781 [826] ● incurred, who have seen or heard of X's heroism, readily believe the fiction that he has returned for a meal, and has once more gone aloft. One informant owned most emphatically that this was his belief when a young man; he had been warned by his father of the seriousness of the ceremonial and told that if he should dare to speak or think disrespectfully of it, a *kusiut* would "grip him by the ankle causing the flesh to become rotten." During a Cannibal's absence the uninitiated remain in a state of terror, fearing that, on returning, he may choose to light-haste them and devour them. In consequence, they seek refuge in their bedrooms, or at any rate in the immediate vicinity of their houses.

*375 *796 After an absence of thirty or forty days it is decided that X shall return at a certain time. During the night preceding, he washes and shaves his head to further the belief that he has been to a land where the great wind has blown away his hair as well as the dirt from his body. Several accomplices are sent out, to a mountain above the village, to a house in the valley below, and to an island in the vicinity. In the early dawn the man up the mountain drones and growls, usually four times, according to the arrangement made. The people listen expectantly. After a short pause, the man in the valley makes the same noise; no mortal could cover the distance between the two places in the time that has elapsed, but all things are possible to a Cannibal. A herald goes through the village, crying out:

"We are left behind, we are left behind."

The *kuksiut* dash off upstream towards the place from which the sound is still coming, but as they draw near it is stilled, only to break forth presently from the island behind them. The herald goes through the village informing everybody that:

"He has gone away."

Presently X dashes out into a clearing on the island, naked and with arms reddened; he runs around madly while an accomplice in concealment uses a whistle. The *kuksiut* pursue

seldom a chief who had given many potlatches. Successful warriors rarely drew such an one; his position placed him above the dangers to which lesser men were subject.

Raids appear never to have been carried out solely for the purpose of giving warriors opportunities to display their prowess, or of permitting young men to prove their mettle. Scarcity of food was the commonest cause for forays when, of course, the victims were chosen for their accumulated supplies. The Kwakiutl especially, lacking abundance of salmon, often attacked the Bella Coola. Even more dreaded were the Kitkatla, the most warlike people of the central coast, who used to sail for many miles to carry off slaves whom they sold or traded for other commodities. Trespassing, too, was a source of friction which often led to hostility. In such a case, the offenders were usually held up to ridicule or persecution, and the irritation gradually increased until wiped out in bloodshed. Members of a tribe which had suffered from a raid prompted by any of these motives would await a suitable opportunity for retaliation; this in turn would be avenged, and a vendetta often ensued lasting for generations. As already described, a ceremonial were brought punishment from a neighbouring tribe; this was the only motive which caused fighting between different Bella Coola villages. In the last century there was a struggle of this kind between the people of *Stuie* and *Alqūlcol* in which the former were victorious and took many slaves who were later ransomed. When ill-luck had dogged a village or a group of villages for some time, the inhabitants sometimes endeavoured to wipe out their misfortunes by attacking another tribe.

The teeming salmon at Bella Coola, Kimsquit, and *Talio*, made it unnecessary for the Bella Coola to wage aggressive war for which they were unfitted both on account of their unmilitary attitude and their lack of central authority. On the other hand, they were tempting victims for more belligerent neighbours. The narrow Bella Coola valley, however, far removed from the open sea, and densely populated, was difficult to attack.

as a warrior. Such a chief had no command over his followers. If he were a man of great prestige, many would be willing to serve under him, but he could not compel the services of anyone except his own slaves. A few individuals often declined to follow their fellows to war, although the force of public opinion usually prevented a too individualistic course. Inhabitants of other towns used their own discretion whether or not to join the party. If some of their relations had been slain in the previous attack, revenge influenced them to share in the retaliation, otherwise only the prestige of a mighty chief could attract them. No case is known in which all the Bella Coola villages joined in a single expedition; there were often temporary alliances between neighbouring settlements, but complete lack of central organization. The course of events was similar when a chief wished to raid without the motive of avenging an attack. For example, if a Bella Coola had been enslaved by a foreign tribe and slain by its owner, a brother of the victim might decide on revenge. The usual course was to kill a slave belonging to the murderer, though sometimes he led a raiding party if he could gain the necessary support.

Each warrior provided his own weapons, frequently the same as those used for hunting. Bows with obsidian-tipped arrows were most relied upon for offence, though slings were also used from canoes. Every man carried a spear, pointed like an arrow, for hand-to-hand fighting, although there was relatively little of this, most of the combats being fought at a distance with much noise, boasting, and expletives, but few casualties. Spears were, however, useful if the attackers succeeded in surprising a village at night. Hostilities are a thing of the past, consequently it was impossible to obtain detailed information respecting offensive weapons. Armour consisted of maple or birch slats reinforced with moosehide and worn around the body and chest; this rendered quick movement difficult but was effective against arrows. Muskets were introduced many years ago and armour consequently became useless. Large shields of moosehide were carried in all canoes,

177 fathers. Inherited beliefs are too deep-rooted to pass away
771 entirely within a few generations. Even those who claim to
[181] have adopted the new faith remain convinced of the potency of magic, and of the existence of those supernatural creatures which do not actively conflict with the white man's creed. Such lack of consistency is a world-wide trait, particularly intelligible among the Bella Coola whose philosophy abounds in contradictions, dependent upon statements handed down in the origin myths of different families.

626 The Bella Coola are constrained not only by the omni-
[181] presence of supernatural beings; they are constantly subjected to the influence of their fellows. They are far less individualistic than white people. A chief may boast that he can do as
[622] he pleases, that he can disregard the restrictions of lesser men; he often does so, but only because public opinion recognizes that he has reached a position of eminence by giving many potlatches. The duly validated warrior is brave because he
[703] feels that everyone is aware of his valour. The man who per-
[769] forms some ceremony in accordance with an ancestral myth incorporates himself with his forbears, and is strengthened by the conviction that he has gained their support and approbation. In every phase of life, a person is profoundly affected
177 by the approval or disapproval of his neighbours. At present
626 the construction of small houses, each occupied by a single
342 family, makes it possible for a man to hide himself, or to do work unknown to the rest of the community. This lessens the force of public opinion, although it is even now more potent than conscience in checking anti-social acts. Formerly, in communal houses, every action was fully known, making individual freedom of thought and act virtually impossible. A man
[602] is chiefly influenced by his relatives who take a great share in what the white man would consider purely family affairs. The effect of the group upon the individual must not be overlooked, nor can it be over-stressed in a study of these people.

177 The education and conversion of the younger men have
626 enormously lessened their reliance upon their fellows. In former
182
561

times, older relatives were revered, not only as senior members of the ancestral family, but as those most familiar with myths and other cherished possessions. With the spread of new ideas, the young people no longer respect the love of their elders, and consequently do not heed their admonitions and advice. Theoretically, such self-reliance would seem desirable, but in practice it has led to unfortunate results. A young man, considering himself superior to the older people, glories in acting on his own initiative, but too often he lacks the requisite strength of character to guide his own life. If he wishes to drink, he does so; if he desires to marry, he chooses his mate without considering the transmission of ancestral rights which stabilized unions in former times; if he tires of his wife, he deserts her for another; if he cheats or steals, he is no longer restrained by relatives who fear disgrace. The elders, incapable of stemming the tide, watch sadly and ask seriously whether the coming of the white man has brought compensation for the loss it has caused. It is deplorable that the emancipation of the younger men and women has taken place before the development of the sense of individual responsibility and conscience which public opinion formerly rendered less necessary. Christianity provides a moral code for those who are fully converted, but for the many in the transition stage, the break-down of the old system of family influence has been tragic.

Profound religious beliefs and lack of individual initiative are shared by all Bella Coola with the exception, perhaps, of a few of the younger people who, having been educated at white man's schools, have adopted the new outlook unconditionally. In most characteristics they display as wide variability as any other people. In truthfulness, for example, they range from one extreme to the other. As the writer became familiar with the older men, he found it possible to recognize without difficulty the strength of some and the weakness of others. There are liars, but they can be easily detected owing to their lack of finesse. It is a pleasure to record the reliability of the author's friends and informants. Their veracity was checked repeat-

G. Mc Dermith E-9 (1922-1924) 1948
NEB Bellacoola MSS

ally until complete confidence was established, simplifying work in the field to an enormous extent. Equal trust could be placed on these men in other respects; articles of value were repeatedly left in their houses with the absolute certainty that they would be guarded with care. Some few individuals there were, however, who were neither honest nor trustworthy. Bella Coola religion is not concerned with ethics, but public opinion demands honour in dealing with relatives or friends. In former times, for example, debts incurred by an individual were considered a liability by his relations. If a man died after buying goods on credit for a potlatch, his family were disgraced if they failed to pay his bills; now, unfortunately, nothing constrains the younger people, many of whom try to avoid settling even their own debts, much less those of dead relatives. Individual conscience has not replaced the tribal and, more specifically, family influence. Dishonesty in small matters is not uncommon, particularly in dealing with white people who, according to the Bella Coola, were the first to transgress. The older people bitterly lament the lack of morality of the younger and state, probably with entire justification, that they would have been prevented by the open life which prevailed when several families shared a single house. On the whole, however, the average Bella Coola is probably no less honest than the average white man.

Individuals vary enormously in mental ability. In making this investigation, it was necessary to interview all the older people of the tribe. Disregarding those unwilling to provide information, it was found that some absolutely lacked the ability to explain matters with which they were familiar; some did not have sufficient patience to be good teachers; some were so forgetful that they would omit necessary points in a story or account; some were downright stupid, whereas others displayed mental ability of no mean order. In reading ethnological literature, one is apt to think of the troubles experienced by the author, and to overlook the fact that natives have as

115 Schooner behind the mental acumen of Joshua and Jim, but
[179] he revealed himself as a tribal patriarch, proud of his family's
[153] history and eager to assist his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, but finding himself lost and helpless in the struggle before them. With sadness, but without bitterness, he used to speak of the approaching end of Bella Coola culture, and his words brought home the tragedy which the spread of civilization brings to so many, and the responsibility resting upon the white people as a whole.

153 Until an intelligence test is devised to correlate the mental
118 ability of the white man with that of the native, it is impossible to compare the two scientifically. None the less, the writer deliberately expresses the opinion that Joshua Moody and Jim Pollard are two of the most brilliant men he has met in any walk of life. They are undoubtedly the most able of the Bella Coola; others have only slightly less ability, while the mass of the population compares favourably with an
198 average white community. Their ability, however, is definitely conditioned by their conservatism. Absolute trust in the traditions of their ancestors has checked speculation, as the established explanation is never questioned; new inventions, unauthorized by custom, have been regarded as almost sacri-
[624] legious; the force of public opinion, while valuable as a deterrent to anti-social practices, has effectively restrained innovations. The Bella Coola are a good example of a community where development has been atrophied by extreme conservatism fostered by religious beliefs.

105 Taking into account the material obstacles, the achieve-
[322] ments of these people have not been insignificant. In former times, provided only with tools of stone and untempered copper, they built graceful canoes, made watertight boxes, hewed planks from mighty cedars, and erected large houses which called for considerable engineering skill. Judged by
[532] white standards, their carving and painting lacked artistic deli-
[535] cacy, but it required no mean ability to portray crest designs to meet their own standards. Passing from the purely mechanical

group. The moral code is not concerned with animals. The life of the Bella Coola would be unbearable to most white people, yet they find it far from unpleasant. They sigh at present conditions, but there is much to amuse them notwithstanding. If several people are talking together, one is sure to hear bursts of laughter every few minutes. It takes little to interest them; a story they have heard a hundred times, the troubles of a neighbour with his wife, the awkwardness of a white man, the stupidity of the investigator, any of these is enough to cause a hearty laugh. When collecting information, it was consistently necessary to joke with them; the most feeble witticism was enough, but they lost interest in the work unless kept smiling. Their sense of humour is not refined; jests about sexual matters are common and are enjoyed alike by men, women, and children. It is not that their tastes are perverted, but rather that they have no reticence in discussing this topic, so they find it easy to see the ludicrous aspects of a subject which is ever near the surface in their minds. They have no hesitation in poking fun at their friends; a successful practical joke, such as hiding the writer's tobacco, is enough to fill them with amusement. If the victim shows temporary resentment, the glee of his friends is complete, and shrieks of laughter usually terminate the trick.

Unless the white man who comes to live among the Bella Coola is unusually broad-minded, he is at first repelled by the dirt and untidiness prevailing everywhere; even the people themselves seem unnatural. He finds it difficult to realize the sincerity of their religious beliefs, and the manner in which these influence their daily lives is hard to grasp. The potlatch system appears so grotesque that it seems to reflect a psychology diametrically opposed to his own. The force of public opinion on personal conduct is almost incomprehensible. Gradually, however, he begins to understand the reasons underlying Bella Coola life. The potlatch becomes intelligible when regarded as a means of achieving fame; constant attention to supernatural beings is natural considering the firm conviction

2; McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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105 of their omnipresence; the guiding force of public opinion is
182 seen as a check on individual licence, fostered or inculcated by
[626] the ties which hold together ancestral families and make it impossible for a man to lead an isolated life where others will not be affected by his actions. If the white man is willing to receive new ideas, he will learn much from the comments of the Bella Coola on his own customs. Many have been to
[556] Victoria or Vancouver, and they feel that the contrasts of
[602] wealth observable in such big cities are atrocious; they ask
[956] how this is compatible with Christianity. They feel that it is unnatural for a man not to receive support from his cousins of all degrees; that the hoarding of wealth for the mere gratification of personal desires is selfish; that the selling of land is extraordinary; and that failure to ascribe every incident to supernatural causes is sacrilegious. These differences of viewpoint on so many matters explain the first impression of strangeness. A careful investigator comes to realize that he is among a people who fundamentally differ but slightly from his compatriots, though outwardly they have little in common. With respect to love, ambition, parental affection, sense of honour, pride, intelligence, even humour and vanity, the Bella Coola are essentially similar to ourselves. Unfortunately, these characteristics are expressed in ways unintelligible and often repellant to the casual traveller. If he will only look beneath the surface, he will find a people who are neither saints nor sinners, but essentially human, with the faults and follies as well as the elements of strength and wisdom which comprise, as Kipling puts it, "Men in a world of men."

177 The coming of the white civilization has been cataclysmic
[161] to the Bella Coola. Within two generations they have been
[361] reduced to a mere handful; instead of living in scattered villages, roaming the mountains for game and fishing at will, they now dwell in a single settlement and the taking of animals and fish is subject to law; the introduction of metal tools and mechanical appliances has revolutionized their mode of life; new foods, new clothing, new furniture has altered their living conditions; fermented drink has presented a factor unknown

2.14: Dorsett E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NES Bellacoola NES

 1927

Sinaqoil: One of the first men to settle in the Dean River valley in the beginning of time.

Sinaxinaxil: 1—"Right Hand": Name of a *Sisaok* repository derived from a supernatural creature.
2—*Kwakiut* name of a Bella Coola woman.

sin'axsis: Intangible *Kwakiut* prerogative of imitating entire. [424]

sinkinkaxsis: Song sung by a *Sisiutaxsa* dancer on recovery from apparent death. [861]

sinkkaa: Regular bearings given to a male child. [805]

Sinkkaxsa, "Time for Gathering Fern Root": Fourth moon after the summer solstice.

Sinkkwaxsa: Rain after storm, anthropomorphized. This presumably refers to rain that comes after violent thunder. [821]

Sinkkwaxsis di Xiut, "The Gathering of the Supernatural Beings": Fifth moon after the summer solstice. [805]

sinnaklaut: Term of opprobrium applied to one who will not allow his children to perform ceremonial dances. [626]

sinnaxil: Outright bestowal of a prerogative at marriage. [425]

sinnaxis: Departure to a new locality.

sinl, sinnatlas, sinnt: Father's brother or mother's brother. [601]

sinnas: Puddle.

sinnatlas: Dangerous power such as is present at various petrified places. [501]

Sinnaxsa: One of the names of the supreme god.

Sinnlaxsl: Ancestral name of a Bella Coola woman. [778]

sinnt, sinnatlas, sinnx: 1—Any supernatural being, the significance being, "Learned."
2—Supernatural power of any kind.
3—Synonym for *qomoks*, the large *nusuk* whistle.
4—Killer whale. [825]
5—Song.
6—*Kwakiut* name of one of the first men to settle at Kimsquit in the beginning of time.

Sinnx-i: Part of a peculiar repository.

Sinnxnxtlis: Celebrated Bella Coola warrior. [533]

sinnxnxlas: Wordless chorus.

Sinnxl-as, "Where Canoes Are Left": Village on the upper Kimsquit River.

Sinnlt: Celebrated *Djoldzams* chief living in the last century.

sinnlitam: 1—Expedition without definite objective, made by a dependent person. [828]
2—Individual making such a journey. [484]

Sinnsa-a: 1—Daughter of the supreme god.
2—*Kwakiut* name of a Bella Coola woman.

sinxtx-inuitxa: Place where healing power is petrified.

Sinxinfutsxam: Synonym for *Matlokila*, the supernatural being connected with *nusuk* rites.

sinwinmaq: *Kwakiut* dance or object used in the land above which serves as pattern or model, *tsunuxsta*, for the user's protégé on earth.

sinwnkkutmuk: Actual goods used for the "Opening," the first public announcement of a forthcoming marriage. [584]

sinwul: Unmarried mother. [848]

siyaatlx: To perform the services of a herald to a master, especially the proper direction of all chiefly rites. The word *siaatlx* may be connected with this.